

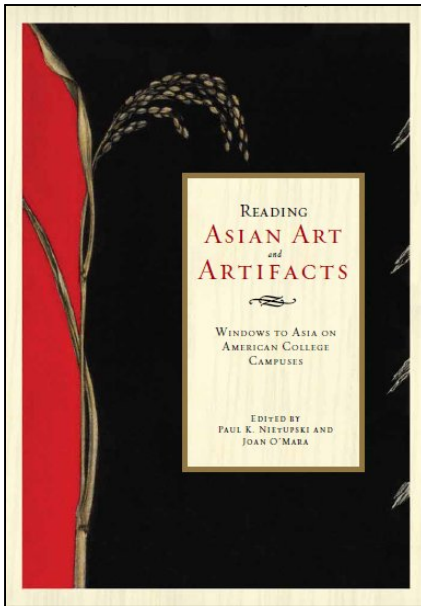
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## Reading Asian Art and Artifacts

*Windows to Asia on American College Campuses*

**By Paul K. Nietupski and Joan O'Mara**



*“Reading Asian Art and Artifacts provides an illuminating discussion on the role of arts and material culture in our understanding of Asia in historical times. The examples of arts and artifacts selected exclusively from the collection from various liberal arts colleges in the United States serve as a window to our students to gain an intimate view of the culture, economy, and politics of diverse regional and cultural traditions across Asia. Meanwhile, the collection of those arts and artifacts in the west serves as mirrors to reflect our knowledge and understanding of Asia through time. Written by accomplished scholars and devoted teachers, the text presents an intriguing “reading” and understanding of the arts, artifacts, and Asian culture from a multi-discipline perspective. — Yan Sun, Associate Professor of Art History, Gettysburg College*

This book begins with the understanding that, in addition to its aesthetic qualities, Asian art and material artifacts are expressive of cultural realities and constitute a "visible language" with messages that can be read, interpreted, and analyzed. Asian art and artifacts are understood in their contexts, as "windows" into cultures, and as such can be used as a powerful

pedagogical tool in many academic disciplines.

The book includes essays by scholars of Asian art, philosophy, anthropology, and religion that focus on objects held in ASIANetwork schools. The ASIANetwork collections are collectively reflective of Asian societies, historical and religious environments, political positions, and economic conditions. The art objects and artifacts were discovered sometimes in storage and were sometimes poorly understood and variously described as fine art, curiosities, souvenirs, and markers of events in a school's history. The chapter authors tell the stories of the collections, and the collections themselves tell stories of the collectors.

This volume is intended for use in many disciplines, and its interpretive structures are adaptable to other examples of art and artifacts in other colleges, universities, and museums. An online database of some 2000 art objects held in the ASIANetwork schools' collections supplements this book.

### About the Authors

**Paul K. Nietupski** is professor at John Carroll University. He is the author of *Labrang Monastery: A Tibetan Buddhist Community on the Inner Asian Borderlands, 1709-1958*.

**Joan O'Mara** (1946-2009) was professor of East Asian studies at Washington and Lee University and a specialist in Japanese and Chinese art history.

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